

Virginia Health Bulletin: The New Virginia Law To Preserve Racial Integrity, March 1924

2

Virginia Health Bulletin

In each case evidence was found to show that either the people themselves or their connections were reported to our office to be of mixed blood.

Our Bureau has kept a watchful eye upon the situation, and has guarded the welfare of the State as far as possible with inadequate law and power. The condition has gone on, however, and is rapidly increasing in importance.

Unless radical measures are used to prevent it, Virginia and other parts of the Nation must surely in time go the way of all other countries in which people of two or more races have lived in close contact. With the exception of the Hebrew race, complete intermixture or amalgamation has been the inevitable result.

To succeed, the intermarriage of the white race with mixed stock must be made impossible. But that is not sufficient, public sentiment must be so aroused that intermixture out of wedlock will cease.

The public must be led to look with scorn and contempt upon the man who will degrade himself and do harm to society by such abhorrent deeds.

The Bureau of Vital Statistics, Clerks who issue marriage licenses, and the school authorities are the barriers placed by this law between the danger and the safety of the Commonwealth.

The task of the Bureau of Vital Statistics is a great one, with not a cent of appropriation to accomplish it with.

There is a plan, however, by which it may be financed if the public will lend its aid.

Thousands have applied for the registration of births that occurred before June 14, 1912, the date when the old law went into effect.

The new law further provides for the registration of all persons who desire it, and who will make application for such registration of color and birth, remitting at the same time the fee of twenty-five cents for each applicant. Do not send stamps. These births will be permanently recorded and preserved for all time, and will be of great value for many purposes, such as to prove American citizenship when applying for passports to go abroad, and for establishing and preserving the family tree for future generations.

We will even admit for registration persons living in Virginia but born elsewhere. Also Virginians now living elsewhere. A family may complete its family tree by recording deceased ancestors or relatives. Each person will thus obtain full value received for the small fee. Married women should give both their full maiden name and name of husband.

If ten or twenty thousand or more will register within the next few weeks, we will be able to provide printed forms, filing cases, desks, typewriters, postage, and clerk hire, to begin a vigorous State-wide educational propaganda. After 90 days those who do not register at once may do it through our local registrars at the same cost. Write at once for sufficient registration cards and instructions, enclosing for reply a stamped addressed envelope large enough to hold 3 by 5 inch cards. A card announcing the registration will be returned as soon as possible. Lodges, patriotic orders, womens' organizations, and schools can act in bodies.

For the purpose of establishing the true color of individuals for the future, physicians and others who report births and marriages, will as far as possible use color terms accurately.

A Mulatto is the offspring of a white person and a negro.

A Quadroon is the offspring of a mulatto and a white person.

An Octoroon is the offspring of a quadroon and a white person.

Citation: Virginia Health Bulletin: The New Virginia Law To Preserve Racial Integrity, March 1924, Box 76, Folder 8, Virginia Governor (1922-1926: Trinkle), Executive Papers, Acc. 21567b, State Government Records Collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond.